

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 3001

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK, US
SUBJ: OAU ASST SEC GEN ONU ON ZIMBABWE

REF: (A) STATE 169971 (B) ADDIS ABABA 2968

SUMMARY: IN STATEMENT TO ETHIOPIAN NEWS AGENCY (ENA) JULY 5, ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) ASST SEC GEN FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS DR. PETER ONU SUGGESTED THAT PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WOULD "DOMINATE" KHARTOUM MEETINGS. HE APPEARED TO LEAVE DOOR OPEN TO ALL PARTY CONFERENCE ON ZIMBABWE AND DID NOT ASSERT THAT PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF ZIMBABWE PEOPLE. WHILE OAU HAS SUPPORTED SOME LIBERATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS IN PAST, IT HAS GENERALLY ADOPTED AS OAU POLICY FRONTLINE STATES' POSITIONS ON ZIMBABWE. END SUMMARY

1. DR. ONU GAVE JULY 5 INTERVIEW TO ENA PRIOR TO LEAVING ADDIS ABABA FOR KHARTOUM. COMMENTING ON LEVEL OF PRESENT STRUGGLE IN ZIMBABWE, ONU REPORTEDLY SAID OAU WOULD HAVE TO RE-EXAMINE AND ASSES SITUATION TO SEE IF THERE IS ANY ROOM FOR NEGOTIATED PEACEFUL SOLUTION. HE RESTATED THAT OAU HAS RECOGNIZED PATRIOTIC FRONT AS MOVEMENT CARRYING
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OUT ARMED STRUGGLE IN ZIMBABWE AND HAD REJECTED INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. ONU ADDED, "THERE WILL BE PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO INCREASE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE TO PATRIOTIC FRONT."

2. REFERRING TO ALL PARTY CONFERENCE, ONU SAID "THERE IS NOT MUCH TIME. IT WILL BE UP TO ELEMENTS IN INTERNAL

SETTLEMENT TO AGREE TO AN ALL PARTY CONFERENCE, WHICH THE OAU HAS SUPPORTED, IN ORDER TO RESOLVE PEACEFULLY THE PROBLEM OF ZIMBABWE." ONU CLAIMED THAT BECAUSE ARMED STRUGGLE OF PF IS GOING WELL, IT IS RESPONSIBILITY OF IAN SMITH AND HIS "AFRICAN COLLABORATORS TO READ HAND-WRITING ON WALL."

3. ONU ACKNOWLEDGED REV. SITHOLE WOULD BE GOING TO KHARTOUM, BUT QUESTIONED WHETHER LATTER WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO TALK TO ANYBODY. HE REVEALED THAT SOME OF SITHOLE'S MEN HAD BEEN IN TRIPOLI TO ATTEND THE OAU MEETING IN FEB. 1978.MMVM, BUT "NOBODY TALKED TO THEM." ONU SAID THAT SITHOLE'S POSITION OF BEING HEARD WAS NOT IMPORTANT, IN VIEW OF FACT HE AND HIS LIKES HAD DECIDED TO WORK WITH ENEMY.

4. COMMENT: ONU IS NOT ALWAYS MOST RELIABLE SPOKESMAN FOR FUTURE OAU POSITIONS, BUT HE USUALLY REFLECTS ACCURATELY ESTABLISHED OAU POLICIES SUCH AS SUPPORT FOR ALL PARTY CONFERENCE. QUESTION OF OAU STAND ON PF AND ZIMBABWE WHICH WILL EMERGE FROM KHARTOUM STILL REMAINS QUITE OPEN. IN PAST, FIVE FRONTLINE STATES HAVE BEEN MORE INSTRUMENTAL IN INFLUENCING OAU POLICY TOWARD ZIMBABWE, THAN HAS BEEN AFRICAN LIBERATION COMMITTEE (ALC). IF FRONTLINE CONTINUES TO SUPPORT ALL PARTY CONFERENCE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT FULL OAU WILL ACCEPT MORE HARDLINE ALC RECOMMENDATIONS.

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